



We all live in a watershed.

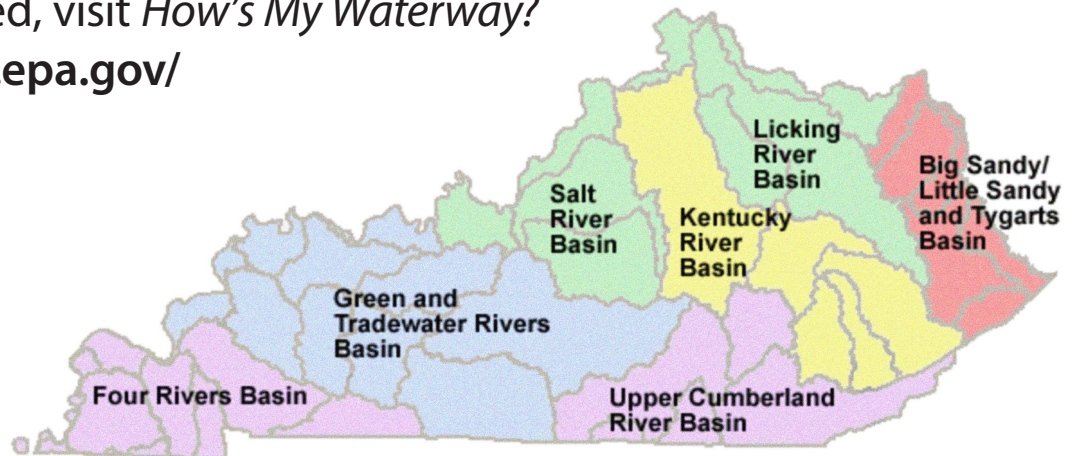
A watershed is an area of land that drains water to a single water body.

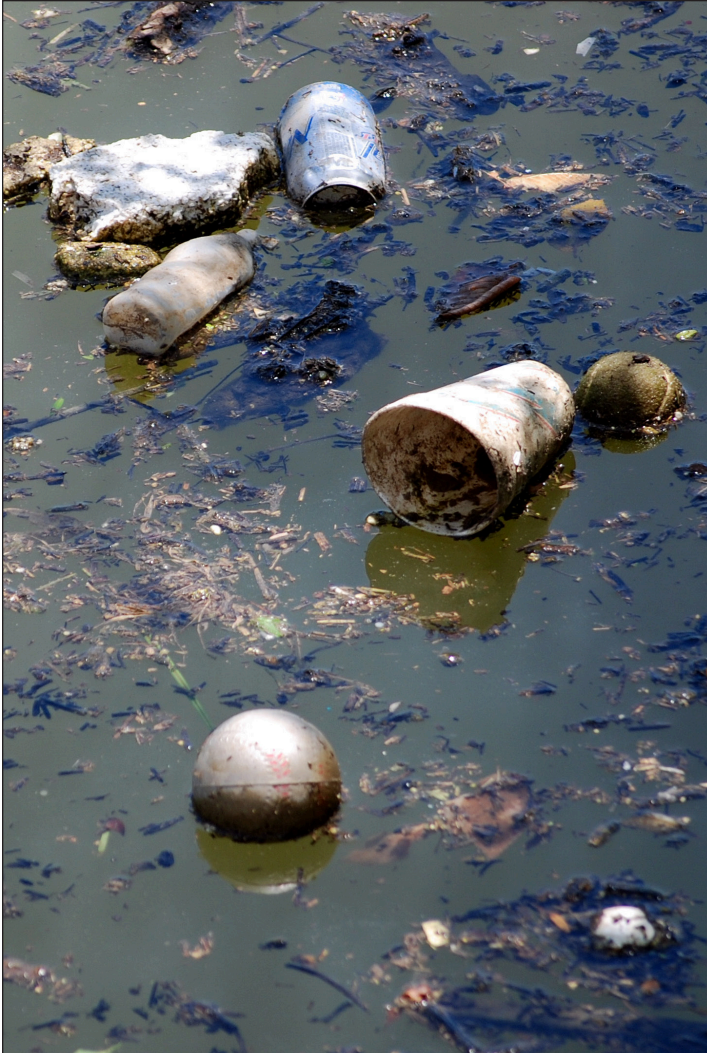
Watersheds are as small as a few acres draining into a stream or as large as several states draining into the ocean. Smaller watersheds join together to make larger watersheds.

Kentucky is divided into seven major watersheds, or basins. Knowing what watershed you live in is a first step toward protecting water quality.

To find your watershed, visit *How's My Waterway?*

<https://mywaterway.epa.gov/>





We change the health of our watersheds with our use of the land. How we use the land affects how water flows and the quality of the water.

Rain or snow melt will either soak into the soil or run along the surface.

Pollutants are carried in the water as it runs off the land.

Rain may pick up motor oil, fertilizer, or loose soil and carry it to a water body.

If rain lands on a bare hillside, it may wash soil away.

Runoff pollution is the largest water quality problem in the United States today.

Keep your watershed healthy.

- Don't litter.
- Compost yard waste.
- Never sweep contaminants into the street or storm drain.
- Choose hardy plants that require little water.
- Use fertilizers and pesticides sparingly.
- Cover bare soil with straw or mulch to prevent soil erosion.
- Use wood, brick, or gravel for patios and walkways so water can soak in rather than running off.





- Pick up after your pet.
- Maintain your septic system by having it serviced every three to five years.
- Walk, bike, or carpool so fewer pollutants are released into the air.
- Install a rain garden to capture and reduce runoff.
- Use a rain barrel to capture runoff from rooftops.



- Dispose of solid and hazardous wastes properly.
- Recycle items such as paint, electronics, and batteries.
- Visit <http://www.earth911.com/recycling/> to learn how to recycle in your area.
- Volunteer to monitor your local stream through the Kentucky Watershed Watch organization at <http://kywater.org>.
- Contact your county solid waste coordinator or Cooperative Extension agent for information.



Revised by Lee Moser and Katherine Bullock.

Adapted from *Reducing Stormwater Pollution (AEN-106)*.

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